Student-Teacher-Course Submission FAQs

Arizona Student-Teacher-Course Connection

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State Report Manager (SRM)

What are we supposed to use to submit data to the Student-Teacher-Course Connection? Is it the same as SAIS submissions?

You will submit your data to ADE using a tool created by ESP Solutions Group called State Report Manager™.

What is SRM?

State Report Manager™ (SRM™) is a tool that allows Arizona LEAs to submit data about students, teachers, and courses required by ADE for the Student-Teacher Course Connection (STC). This tool enables LEAs to ensure that their data meet the validation standards before submitting the data officially to the Arizona Department of Education. Before submitting the data, each LEA must make sure that the data are error-free. SRM enables LEAs to run trials of their data against the validation rules. After running a trial (submission of data), the LEA can view reports that show any errors that were found in the data. The LEA should correct errors and rerun trials until the data are error free.

Why did the Arizona Department of Education select SRM?

ADE required an easy-to-establish and user-friendly means to collect data linking students to courses to teachers in order to meet the requirements of the Race to the Top grant. SRM is used by half a dozen states to collect these data, so the solution is well established.

How does SRM differ from SAIS?

SAIS (the Student Accountability Information System) collects information about all of the students in a LEA. SAIS Data are collected after the 40th and 100th days and at the end of the school year. SRM, on the other hand, is used to collect data only for the Student-Teacher-Course Connection. Data included in the SRM files will generally not duplicate data collected in either SAIS or the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) system. Data from SAIS and HQT will be merged with the data collected in SRM to build a complete Student-Teacher-Course Connection data system.

Accessing STC/SRM

How do I get a user name and password?

Contact stconnection@azed.gov to request a user name and password. After you login for the first time, change the password to one that you will be more likely to remember.

Two levels of user are supported. The first is the Tier 1user who is generally the person who prepares the files for submission. The second level is the Tier 2 user. The Tier 2 user may also be the person who prepares the files for submission. However, only the Tier 2 user may certify that the files are complete and accurate when the files are ready to be submitted to the state. In some districts, there will be only one user who serves in both roles. That person need only have the Tier 2 user capability.

What should I do if I forget my password?

Contact stconnection@azed.gov to get assistance resetting your password.

Can more than one person use my log-in user name and password?

Unlike CourseWalk, STC/SRM will expect only one user per log-in. The information being sent through SRM is more confidential than the information in CourseWalk, thus the restrictions are greater. If more than one person in your LEA needs to have a log-in, please contact stconnection@azed.gov to get another log-in and password. You may decide whether each person with a log-in is allowed to certify the data to be submitted.

What URL should I be using?

Once you receive your user name and password, if you want to practice using SRM for your submissions, you may use the Training Site. It is located at:

https://training.azed.gov/srm

For actual submissions when the submission window is opened, use the Production Site. It is located at:

https://www.azed.gov/srm

Student-Teacher-Course Files

Where can I find training materials related to the STC File Submissions?

The STC File Submission Training Materials are available on the STC Website. http://www.azed.org/racetothetop/stc/stcresources.

What is an STC file?

There are two STC files (Student Section Enrollment and Course Section) that must be submitted to STC/SRM which must be in the exact format specified in the Collection File Specifications Document. They must be either Comma Separated Variable (.csv) or Tab Delimited Text (.txt) files. The files contain data extracted from your student information system (SIS) and/or other sources maintained by the LEA. The files are LEA files, not school files.

What formats am I supposed to use for the files?

The Collection File Specification Document describes the order in which the data elements must appear. In addition, the Collection File Specification contains a listing of the acceptable options for coded elements in the STC files. Non-coded elements (any elements other than coded elements, dates and identifiers) are text fields where you may put whatever information is correct for your school district (e.g., grade/mark, session). Useful information is also contained in the Collection Rules by Item which lists all of the errors and warnings that may occur when files are submitted.

Where can I find the Collection File Specification and the Collection Rules by Item documents?

The Collection File Specification and the Collection Rules by Item documents are available on the Race to the Top Website at http://www.azed.gov/racetothetop/stc/stcresources/ under Other Materials. You may also download the Collection File Specification by logging in to the Training Site (a.k.a. Sandbox) at https://training.azed.gov/srm and clicking on the STCConnection Fall 2012 under Current State Reports.

How do I get the data out of my SIS and into the STC file formats?

You should work with your SIS vendor to produce the two files that must be submitted to STC. Because every vendor must work with all of their LEAs that have to submit the STC files, the vendor should have a solution to meet your needs. It you have a proprietary system, you will need to produce extracts from your system just as you must do for SAIS reporting. If you need assistance in this endeavor, please contact stconnection@azed.gov.

Are there templates for the files?

There are two templates, one for each of the two files that you need to submit – Student Course Enrollment and Course Section. These templates are in Excel, and contain the headers for each variable that must appear in the files.

Where do I go to download the SRM templates?

1. Go to the Training Site at https://training.azed.gov/srm and click on the STCConnection Fall 2012 under Current State Reports.

2. Go to the line with STCConnection Fall 2012 and click on "Run a Trial." This will take you to the Import Source Data page.
3. There is a row for each file. Click on "View" under Expected Headers, and you will see the templates. You can download for each required file an Excel file which is a template for use in creating your files or knowing what are the required headers.

What goes in each column of the STC templates?

Each column is specifically defined. The column headers are abbreviated versions of the data that go in the columns. The Collection File Specification Document contains a description of the data elements for each file.

Can I build my files in Excel?

Some users find it easier to work with MS Excel files, then convert the files into *.CSV or tab-delimited text (*.TXT) files. (To convert the files, click the Office Button and choose Save As Other Formats. Then pick the type of file you want to use.)

The templates you obtain from the Training file contain the column headers specified in the first row. These column headers must appear exactly as they are written in the templates or you will receive error messages. Before submitting the Excel files, they must be converted to either .CSV or .TXT files. There are two caveats.

1. If you provide the Educator Stakeholder Identifier in the Course Section file, Excel will truncate the number because it has a 15-digit limit. Therefore, in order to use Excel, you must put a single quote symbol in front of the Stakeholder ID. This will enable Excel to know that it is a text field and it will maintain all 16 digits. Thus when you save the file as a .CSV File, the number will be fully maintained. Also, when you open your .CSV files to make corrections and it opens the file in Excel, it won't read the Stakeholder ID as a number rather than a text field. When you submit the .CSV file to STC, it will recognize this field as a text field and ignore the single quote.
2. Excel uses a different format for showing dates than required by SRM. You may highlight the column and change the formats for dates prior to converting the files to .CSV or .TXT files. This change will remain in place when you save your file as an Excel file.

Can I leave in the hyphens in the Educator Stakeholder Identifier or must they be removed?

You can remove the hyphens or you can leave them in place. When SRM reads the Stakeholder ID it will remove the hyphens just as it will remove a leading apostrophe if you use one.

What is the field length of the Educator Stakeholder Identifier?

The Stakeholder ID field has been lengthened to 20 characters. This allows you to put in the 16 digit identifier with three hyphens and the leading apostrophe that enables you to use Excel to work on your files.

Where do I store the files I am going to submit?

You should store your prepared files on the computer that will be used to submit the data in a location that will be easy to find.

Do I have to pay my SIS vendor to produce the STC files?

You should not have to pay your SIS vendor for helping you to produce the STC files.

What Should be Included in My STC Files?

Students - The Student-Teacher-Course (STC) Connection collects information about all students enrolled in your school district over the course of the school year. Data are collected three times during the school year at the same time as the SAIS collection. Every student in the SAIS submission should have at least one record in the STC Student Enrollment file. Students who were in a course section for fewer than 10 days need not be reported. Include all courses for which a student receives credit. Non-credit courses need not be reported, but may be included.

- 40 day count – includes one record for <u>every</u> course section taken by <u>every</u> student. If a student is in the course for fewer than 10 days, then a record is not required to be submitted, but may be submitted if you choose. If a student changes classes after 11 or more days, then a record should be present for both the original course taken by the student and the substituted course taken by the student. Use Begin and End dates to indicate how long the student was in the course section.
- 100 day count – includes at least one record for every student submitted in the SAIS submission file. If the student is still in the same course sections as during the 40 day count, then you need not report more than one record for the student. If a student has changed courses in days 41-100, include a record for the original course section taken by the student and a record for the substituted course section taken by the student. If at the end of the quarter or semester a student has a new schedule, you will report all of the course sections completed by the student as well as all of the new course sections in which the student is enrolled. Use Begin and End dates to indicate how long the student was in the class or when the course section ended. A grade/mark earned and credits received information for the student must be included if the course section was completed. If a course is a semester course, then a grade/mark need only be reported at the end of the semester. If the course is a year-long course, then a grade/mark is only reported at the end of the year. Interim grades should not be reported.
- End of Year count - includes a record for <u>every</u> course section completed by <u>every</u> student submitted in the SAIS submission file. If a student changed courses in days 101-EOY, include a record for the original course section and a record for the substituted course section. If at the end of the quarter or semester a student has a new schedule, you will report all of the course sections completed by the student as well as all of the new course sections enrolled in by the student. Use Begin and End dates to indicate how long the student was in the class or when the course section ended. A grade and credit information for the student should be included if the course section was completed.

Teachers – Every teacher that you report in the STC Connection must be in the HQT database at ADE. Every teacher should have at least one course section. Teachers that do not have course sections do not need to be reported, e.g., a mentor teacher or teacher on special assignment. If you report a teacher who is not in the HQT database, you will receive an error. If you report a teacher who is in the HQT database, but who does not have any course sections, you will receive a warning. A teacher's name must be exactly how it is in the HQT database or there will be an error. It is essential that your HQT file be up-to-date when you submit the STC files. Teachers can have more than one course section at a time if they are giving instruction to multiple grade levels of students, but the instruction is at the appropriate level for the students. For instance, a teacher would have three sections if she has 4^{th}, 5^{th}, and 6^{th} grade students in a mathematics class, but she is teaching each grade level content in turn. A teacher can have multiple grade levels in a single course section, but be teaching the same content, such as a high school Second Year Spanish class with 9^{th}, 10^{th}, and 11^{th} grade students.

Course Sections - Every course section that is offered in your local education agency must be reported. Every course section must have at least one teacher. This is generally the "teacher of record." If there are two or more teachers associated with a course section, then all should be reported. Every course must have at least one student.

If you have any questions about who should be included, please contact STConnection@azed.gov.

Is the Education Stakeholder ID for every teacher required?

The Education Stakeholder ID is not required because many districts do not maintain the identifier in their student information systems. If you do not have the ID, you must provide a middle initial and the date of birth for each teacher so that a match can be made to teachers in the HQT database.

How can I get the Education Stakeholder IDs for my teachers?

If you login to Common Logon and access the HQT database, you should be able to obtain this information for your district. If you do not have access to the HQT website through Common Logon, then contact ADE support to get these user rights. There is more information about this on the STC website at http://www.azed.gov/racetothetop/stc/stcresources/.

Do all courses have to be reported, even homeroom and study hall?

No, only report those courses for which students receive credit.

Can you have two courses for a teacher at the same time period? For instance, what if a teacher has one advanced student she is teaching at the same time as she is teaching a regular class.

Yes, you can have two classes meeting at the same time in an instance like this one.

What courses should be coded as “Required for Graduation?”

Courses that are specified by name as requirements for graduation should have this flag indicating yes. For example, you should indicate yes if your LEA requires that all students take English 1, English 2, English 3, English 4, Algebra 1, American History, Civics, and Biology. If, however, students are required to take 2 of 3 Science courses (Biology, Chemistry, Physics), then these should not be identified as Required for Graduation. This is only used for high school courses. It is not required for submission; it is optional.

How do I handle courses taken online through the Arizona Online Instruction website?

Courses offered through Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) should be reported for each student enrolled in one or more of these classes. Here is how you handle some of the data elements that may seem confusing.

Course Sections File

- 1 8 Timetable Day Identifier – varchar 25 – Use whatever makes sense such as “Self-paced” or “On demand”
- 1 9 Class Period – varchar 4 – Use “Open”
- 1 58 Course End Date – Date – Use end of semester date or date when student finishes
- 1 60 Instructional Setting – Option Set - Use “Computer-based or Self-Paced course”
- 1 65 Course Level Characteristic – Option Set – Use “Remedial” or “Regular” depending on the course
- 1 68 External Provider Name – varchar 40 – Put “Arizona Online Instruction”

What is the difference between Session (1.7) and Session Type (1.11)?

The Session Type is a code indicating whether the session in which the course is conducted is a Semester, Trimester, Quarter, Full Year. The Session is an indication of which session is being reported. For instance, The Session type may be Semester, and the Session reported is Fall Semester (or First Semester). It is important that whatever you put in 1.7 Session match what you put in 2.6 Session.

What is a Section Identifier?

A Section Identifier (1.10, 2.11) is a unique number indicating the intersection of a teacher, a course, and a time period. Some SISs maintain this information; others do not. If you have a unique section identifier, this is useful information for matching across files.

How do I compute the Teacher Contribution Percent (1.20)?

There are a number of ways this can be done. Obviously, if there is only one teacher in the course section, the contribution is 100%. If a long-term substitute is in the course section for 9 of the 36 weeks of school, then the Teacher of Record's contribution is 75% (27/36) and the Substitute Teacher's contribution is 25%. If there is more than one teacher in a course section, then the percentage can be divided equally or whatever way makes the most sense.

What if not all of the required data are available in my SIS?

Most, if not all, of the required data should be present in your SIS. However, some of the required data may be kept in another local system. Some of the data elements in the STC files are required and some of the data elements are optional. If you do not have the optional data, that is okay. You must attempt, however, to provide all "required" data. If you have questions or special situations, contact the STCConnection@azed.gov.

Submitting Data to the STC/SRM

When do we submit the files?

The CourseSections and StudentSectionEnrollment files should be submitted right after you submit your SAIS files to ADE. SAIS files must be submitted prior the STC files because STC/SRM looks for students who are in your LEA and reported to SAIS.

What is a Trial?

A Trial is another name for a Submission. The word "Trial" is used in SRM.

How many Trials do I have to do?

On the list in the SRM tool, there will be two files listed. Both of these must be submitted at the same time, thus you will have one Trial (unless you have errors and have to resubmit).

How many files do I have to submit?

Two files must be submitted. The Course Sections file should have an entry for every course taught in your LEA and attended by students. Each course should have one or more teachers associated with it. The Student Section Enrollment file should have a record for every student in every course taken in the LEA.

In what order do I upload the files?

Both files must be submitted at the same time.

How do I upload my files?

1. When your extract files have been created, you will go to https://www.azed.gov/srm and log-in to the entry screen.
2. Go to the line with STCConnection Fall 2012 and click on "Run a Trial." This will take you to the Import Source Data page.

3. Select File to upload.
4. Browse through your files and identify the correct extract files to be uploaded.
5. Click on Import. You will receive an indication that the files are uploading and undergoing validation.
6. When the upload and validation process is completed, you will get a total number of records and an indication of whether or not there are violations or warnings.
7. If there are no violations and the number of records submitted is correct, then your submissions are complete and you may certify the files.
8. If there are violations or insufficient records, then you must correct the files (either by making corrections to the source and creating new extracts or by making corrections to the files) and resubmit.

How does STC validate my file?

STC looks at the data in the file you submit and compares it to a set of "Business Rules." These business rules have been established to ensure that the data are submitted in the correct format and that inter-field relations are met.

How long does the validation take?

For a large file, we estimate that it should take about 10-15 minutes to validate your file.

I got validation errors. What do they mean?

Validation tests are run against the submitted file, and they generate hard errors that must be corrected by the local LEA prior to acceptance by the system. Hard errors include data formatting errors, range checks, and code set checks.

You can click on the Violations report in the Data Violation Screen to see the errors. The Violation Drill Down Screen allows you to see the records on which the errors occurred. On the Single Record Screen, you can see the entire submitted record and the elements with the error(s) appearing highlighted. A full listing of the validation tests (Business rules) is included on the RTTT website at http://www.azed.gov/racetothetop/stc/stcresources/. The document is called Collection Rules by Item.

If SRM detects more than 100 instances of a particular error when doing the validation, it will stop checking that business rule and move on to the next one. It will show that you have 100+ of a particular error. Usually those errors occur in all of the records.

How do I fix my validation errors?

It is recommended that errors be corrected in the source file because these data elements will be reported each of the three reporting times during the school year. If you correct the source data, you will need to do another extract from the data system.

You may also correct the validation errors in the extract file and resubmit it. However, you should go back to correct the data in the source system sometime before resubmitting the data during the next reporting period.

I got validation warnings. What do they mean?

Validation tests also include reasonableness checks that generate warnings (e.g., enrollment in a course section is greater than 50 students, there are teachers with no course sections). A full listing of the validation tests (Business rules) is included on the RTTT website at http://www.azed.gov/racetothetop/stc/stcresources/. The document is called Collection Rules by Item.

How do I view my validation warnings?

The easiest way to see the validation errors and warnings is to look at the Validation Summary Report. This is a report that contains a complete list of the errors and warnings and where they occurred in the file. This will make it easy to find the errors and make corrections in the source or in the file. You can print out or view this spreadsheet to help you make sure you have addressed all of the warnings.

Will the Validation Summary Report include my local course codes or only the state course codes?

If you have mapped your local courses to the State Course Catalog using CourseWalk, then your Validation Summary Report will include both your local course codes and the state course codes.

Do I have to fix my validation warnings?

Errors must be fixed in order for the file to be submitted to the state (ADE). Warnings may be allowed to stand if they are correct.

How do I fix my validation warnings?

Validation warnings are corrected just like validation errors. It is recommended that warnings be corrected in the source file (most likely your SIS) because these data will be reported each of the reporting times during the school year. If you correct the source data, you will need to do another extract from the data system. You may also correct the validation warnings in the extract file and resubmit the files. However, you should go back to correct the data in the source system sometime before resubmitting the data during the next reporting period.

Can I print my Violations Summary Report?

Yes. Click on the Violations Summary Report to view it.

I click on Send to State, but nothing happens.

If your files have not been fixed such that they meet all of the validation rules, then the button “Send to State” will be “grayed out,” and you will not be able to send the data to the State. When your files have met all of the validation rules, the “Send to State” button will turn to blue, and you will be able to send the data to the State (ADE).

Does the person submitting the files also certify the files for the state?

The person certifying the files does not have to be the same person as the one submitting the files; however, the person who certifies the files has to have been given that privilege in the log-in process. The person with the Tier 2 rights should be the person who can vouch for the completeness and accuracy of the data.

How do I certify my submission?

Once your files contain no errors, you will click the button called “Send to State.” STC/SRM will take you to a screen where you will name your file, put a check in the box indicating that you are certifying the files, and click the “Send to State.” Button.

Is there a limit to how many times I can submit my files. I might find an error after the file is submitted.

You may submit the files as many times as you would like prior to certifying the files. If you need to resubmit after you have certified your files, please contact STConnection@azed.gov to let them know you are doing this.

Where do the data go once the files are submitted?

Once the data files are certified, the data are moved into a data warehouse for use by ADE in analyzing the data. The data warehouse also includes information taken from the HQT and SAIS databases as well as from CourseWalk.

How does CourseWalk fit into this process?

The Arizona Department of Education is interested only in receiving state course codes for the courses you offer, not local codes. If you have mapped your local courses to the State Course Catalog in CourseWalk, then SRM will view the mappings in CourseWalk and attribute the state course code to the Course Sections that you report. Thus the files received by the state will have the state course codes.

If you are providing state course codes in your STC/SRM submissions, then SRM will not go to CourseWalk to find the correct state course code.

When must I submit our district's files?

The fall submission of files based on the first 40 days of school must be completed by December 15, 2012. The window for submission is open when you are ready to submit your files following your district's 40th day. Prior to your final submission, you may work with your files in the Sandbox at:

https://training.azed.gov/srm

Your final files must be submitted and certified on the Production Site. It is located at:

https://www.azed.gov/srm